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ABSTRACT

This monograph explores the social context of the school and how this context influences, for better or worse, the academic and social behavior of students. It reviews how most student behavior serves a meaningful purpose for the student and how similar behaviors may serve distinctly different functions for various students. It also explores how many of the common practices employed by educators and school administrators may actually serve to strengthen the very behaviors their actions are designed to curtail. Special attention is given to the role of the school administrator in the development of a school and classroom climate that promotes academic achievement and desired behaviors. Information is presented that can aid administrators in shifting discipline efforts from action designed to merely suppress undesired student behavior to a process of promoting student success through the display of desired behavior. Procedures to assist administrators in the examination of the current level of student functioning, both academically and socially, are described, as well as the importance of monitoring and supporting desired teacher and staff behavior as it relates to student functioning. Practical approaches for the implementation of effective strategies to promote academic achievement and desired student behavior are outlined. (Contains 25 references.) (CR)

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Establishing and Monitoring a School and Classroom Climate That Promotes Desired Behavior and Academic Achievement

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Series Editors

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CASE/CCBD MINI-LIBRARY SERIES
Safe, Drug-Free, and Effective Schools

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About the Council of Administrators of Special Education

CASE is an international and professional organization committed to facilitating the education and general welfare of students with disabilities. CASE promotes professional leadership and provides special education administrators with opportunities for personal and professional development.

Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders

About the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders

CCBD is an international and professional organization committed to promoting and facilitating the education and general welfare of children and youth with behavioral and emotional disorders. CCBD, whose members include educators, parents, mental health personnel, and a variety of other professionals, actively pursues quality educational services and program alternatives for persons with behavioral disorders, advocates for the needs of such children and youth, emphasizes research and professional growth as vehicles for better understanding behavioral disorders, and provides professional support for persons who are involved with and serve children and youth with behavioral disorders.

In advocating for the professionals in the field of behavioral disorders, CCBD (a division of the Council for Exceptional Children) endorses the Standards for Professional Practice and Code of Ethics adopted by the Delegate Assembly of the Council for Exceptional Children in 1983.

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Foreword

Nationwide, school personnel are working to ensure every student a safe, drug-free, quality education. There is no doubt about either the importance or complexity of that task. With mounting pressure to ensure student safety, some school divisions have adopted a so-called zero-tolerance policy of student discipline. No one would quarrel with the original intent of zero tolerance, namely, to protect students from dangerous weapons in schools. However, some authorities do question the logic behind applying the same philosophy to less serious offenses, such as when a student fails to participate in class discussion. Others argue that there are discrepancies in the way current disciplinary policies are being applied. Evidence exists that students from culturally diverse backgrounds often are disproportionately subjected to more severe treatment. A similar concern has been voiced on behalf of students with disabilities. Increasingly, administrators, teachers, and parents are calling for a reasonable middle ground in addressing the issue of student discipline.

At the same time, schools are finding that some established instructional practices are at odds with the needs of an increasingly diverse student population. Although we are witnessing an increase in the use of curricular materials and instructional procedures that reflect greater cultural sensitivity, there is more to be done in this area. With these issues in mind, it is encouraging to find a growing acceptance that a reciprocal relationship exists between learning and behavior problems and that it is shortsighted to address one and ignore the other. Accordingly, more and more administrators, faculty, and staff are redefining the culture of their schools and creating a climate in which school-wide and

classroom-level positive academic and behavior supports are in place for all students.

Further impetus for changing current practices stems from the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which contains provisions that address both the academic and nonacademic performance of students with disabilities. For example, IDEA stipulates that education personnel must not only acknowledge the connection between learning and behavior problems, but also, under certain conditions, take specific steps to address the problem(s). If a student's classroom behavior impedes his or her academic progress or that of classmates, it may signal a need to change one or more aspects of the curriculum, management, or instruction. In limited instances, schools must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and then develop a positive behavioral intervention plan and supports. In that way, more serious learning or behavior problems (usually both) can be addressed.

The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) and the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD) have long shared a common concern about students with and without disabilities. In light of the challenges faced in schools, the leaders of these two divisions of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) decided to cosponsor two institutes on best practices for working with students with learning and behavior problems. We drew upon the expertise of our members to produce a mini-library series that corresponds with the content of these institutes. We are grateful to those who served as both presenters and authors. We also acknowledge those who served as reviewers of these volumes: Charlene Greene (CASE), Bev Johns (CCBD), Bev McCoud (CASE), Russ Skiba (CCBD), Cheryl Zinszer (CASE), John Faust (CASE), and Jim McCormick (CASE). Together, they have contributed a great deal to our understanding of the challenges of 21st century schools.

Lyndal M. Bullock, Jim Chapple, and Robert A. Gable
Series Editors

Introduction 1

The students have entered the building and most have made their way to their first class. As you were greeting those coming through the main entrance, many smiled and said good morning, but a number of the students simply glared at you. As you enter the outer office, you see five students sitting outside your door. Each has engaged in some inappropriate behavior and has been sent to your office for discipline. The secretary hands you a stack of phone messages. You notice that the top two are from parents. The first message is from a father who is upset because his daughter's teacher allegedly screamed at her during class; he wants you to call him right away. The second message is from a mother seeking information about why her son received a 3-day suspension for fighting when another student initiated the problem by making racial slurs. This parent also has left the phone number of her attorney. As she hands you the messages, the secretary indicates that Tommy Hallahan is hiding in one of the boys' bathrooms again and they need your assistance to get him out. She also lets you know that no one has yet seen Juan Martinez, one of the school's chronic truants. You hang up your jacket and begin "another day in paradise."

Unfortunately, the scenario just presented is not atypical for many schools. An increasing number of children and youth are being referred to school administrators for disciplinary action. Insubordination, disrespect, disruption of the learning environment, failure to comply with teacher requests, fighting, and truancy are all near the top of the list of challenging behaviors (Kortering & Brazirel, 1999). Most school administrators and

classroom teachers indicate that student discipline is one of their greatest concerns and that addressing inappropriate student behavior consumes a major part of their day (Latham, 1997).

Often school personnel feel unprepared to deal effectively with issues of student discipline. Most teacher preparation programs pay little attention to course material addressing behavio and classroom management. Programs to educate school administrators tend to concentrate on the legal issues of student discipline and often overlook the practical day-to-day application of effective disciplinary practices in the school setting. Thus, school personnel often rely upon traditional approaches to discipline, even when these approaches prove ineffective (Gable, Quinn, Rutherford, Howell, & Hoffman, 1998).

Many school personnel impose punitive consequences for undesired student behavior in the hope that this will discourage future displays of the behavior. Punishment was the sole consequence provided for over 90% of the infractions observed in a recent study of school disciplinary practices (Colvin, Sugai, & Kame'enui, 1992). While the application of a mild aversive response may curb the undesired behavior of many students, it is ineffective as a means of improving the behavior of the small minority of students who display the greatest percentage of challenging behaviors. In fact, punishment has often been shown to further alienate these students and to exacerbate their disruptive behavior (Repp & Singh, 1990).

Recent trends toward a "get tough" and "zero tolerance" mentality within the schools have resulted in an inclination to address student disruption through exclusion from the classroom and the school (i.e., referral to the dean or principal's office, suspension and expulsion). As a result, those students who are at the greatest risk for academic and social failure are removed from the educational settings that are perhaps best equipped to meet their needs. Interestingly, these are the students most likely to remain in the community as adults. If communities do not address the root of the problem and teach them more socially successful ways to interact, they must be willing to accept the responsibility for continued problems throughout much of these individuals' lifetimes.

Fortunately, there seems to be a growing realization that school personnel must begin to find ways to address the behavior of challenging students through the use of proactive, preventative, and positive behavior supports rather than the simple application of punishment. The 1997 Amendments to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), for example, require the use of positive behavior supports when addressing the behaviors of student with educational disabilities that interfere with their learning or that of their peers (Conroy, Clark, Gable, & Fox, 1999). Unfortunately, many educators feel they lack a basic understanding of student behavior and the knowledge of positive approaches necessary to address student behavior proactively.

In this monograph, I explore the social context of the school and how this context influences, for better or worse, the academic and social behavior of students. I review how most student behavior serves a meaningful purpose for the student and how similar behaviors may serve distinctly different functions for various students. Most important, I explore how many of the common practices employed by educators and school administrators may actually serve to strengthen the very behaviors their actions are designed to curtail. Special attention is given to the role of the school administrator in the development of a school and classroom climate that promotes academic achievement and desired behavior. Information is presented that can aid administrators in shifting discipline efforts from actions designed to merely suppress undesired student behavior to a process of promoting student success through the display of desired behavior. Procedures to assist administrators in the examination of the current level of student functioning, both academically and socially, are described, as well as the importance of monitoring and supporting desired teacher and staff behavior as it relates to student functioning. Practical approaches for the implementation of effective strategies to promote academic achievement and desired student behavior are outlined.

The monograph is divided into two parts. Part One outlines issues related to student behavior and effective approaches to conceptualizing and implementing prevention and intervention

programs within the school setting. This information should assist school administrators in their efforts to open creative dialog with their teachers and staff as they work together to develop a school and classroom climate that promotes student learning and social success. Part Two focuses on the administrator's role in supporting the expected desired behavior of school personnel. Many well-designed programs of school-wide and classroom discipline fail as the result of careless and inconsistent implementation. Practical and effective procedures to monitor and support expected teacher and staff behavior are discussed.

PART ONE

2 The School as a Unique Social Context

In many ways, the school represents a unique social context. Large numbers of children and youth are brought together in the school setting. For most, the school represents their first real opportunity to interact with individuals outside of their family and close neighbors. In many of our public schools, children need to interact with others who are ethnically, culturally, and even linguistically different from themselves. This diversity adds to the social challenge that students must address as they are introduced to ideas and behaviors that may differ from their own. Most students will develop the necessary social skills to meet the demands of the school setting. Some, however, will fail to navigate this complex social setting successfully. These students might be ignored, or worse, they may become the target of ridicule, teasing, taunting, and other forms of peer rejection.

Student social networks (i.e., friendship groups) will evolve that greatly influence the attitudes and behavior of their members. Fellow students will serve as role models and will provide or withhold status and approval from one another, greatly influencing the actions displayed in the school context. The social networks within the school and classroom might encourage the display of desired prosocial behavior or they might just as readily support antisocial behavior. Teachers and school administrators play a significant role, although sometimes unwittingly, in the development of these social networks. How we group students for instruction, the messages we give students related to their competence, and even how we group students when admin-

istering discipline influences the development of student social networks.

Educators should remember that children and youth are not invited to participate in the educational system—they are compelled by law to do so. A significant number of these children, due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g., poverty, abuse or neglect, disease or disorder), are ill prepared to meet the demands of the educational setting. Nevertheless, they are obliged to participate publicly in myriad tasks and activities that they have little or no chance to succeed at or that cause them discomfort by placing them at undue risk for humiliation and embarrassment. Specific activities may have little or no relevance for some students due to the students' cultural backgrounds, values, beliefs, or simply personal interests. These students may lack the necessary background knowledge or motivation for participation in a task for which they see no significance. Yet schools provide few alternatives to students—they must participate in the public display of their social and academic ability. Few teachers allow a student to indicate they are not comfortable with or are uninterested in a given task and therefore prefer not to participate.

What is the typical outcome for a student who is asked to engage in these tasks and activities? If the student responds correctly, the most common result is that additional demands are made. While a student may be praised for exceptional work, this is not a particularly likely outcome (Brophy & Good, 1986; Van Acker, Grant, & Henry, 1996). More often, the teacher—having expected a correct response—will simply move on to the next student. Should the student refuse to participate or simply provide an incorrect response, there is a far greater likelihood that an overt consequence will be provided. Teachers are far more likely to reprimand a student for an undesired activity or to provide an academic correction than they are to praise a desired response (Van Acker et al., 1996). Peers, too, may laugh at a student's error or begin to relegate the student to the group of classmates thought to be less capable. Thus, for some students the risks for participating within the public school setting are very high while the likelihood of gain is quite low. For these students, school may well represent

an aversive setting and one that promotes the display of challenging behavior.

Perhaps even more discouraging is the fact that as educators we continue to expend significant energy engaging in disciplinary practices that violate much of what we know about student development and learning. Many of the procedures educators employ to curb undesired student behavior fail, not for lack of effort, but for lack of understanding of the true nature of the behavior and the application of what is known about how children learn.

3

Taking an Initial Look at Your School Discipline Practices and Student Needs

An important first step in the development of a school-wide or classroom discipline program is a systematic examination of the current practices employed within the school and classroom. School administrators should review any existing discipline records. Federal regulations require schools to keep referral information for students whose behavior results in a suspension and an expulsion (U.S. Department of Education, 1980); however, a complete record of all school disciplinary referrals can be helpful in the development and review of school disciplinary practices. Figure 1 provides a sample disciplinary referral form that has proven helpful in many schools. The information from this type of form can be entered into a typical computer spreadsheet for ease in record maintenance and data manipulation.

Together, the administrator and faculty can review student discipline records to identify:

- *Students with a record of repetitive offenses.* Students with a high number of referrals for repeated offenses often require a level of support and service beyond what is provided to the typical student. Repeated offenses suggest that current disciplinary efforts may be ineffective.
- *Common consequences delivered for various offenses.* Exploration of the consequences provided will allow faculty to determine

_____ School Disciplinary Referral

For Office Use: Recorded ___/___/_____
Age: _____ Grade: _____
Gender (circle): Male Female
Ethnicity: _____

Date: ___/___/_____

Name of Student: _____ Student ID# _____

Name of Person Making the Referral: _____

Time the Offense Took Place: ___:___ a.m. p.m. Others Involved: _____

Location of Offense: _____

Nature of the Offense:

- ☐ Tardy
- ☐ Truancy
- ☐ Leaving the Instructional Area
- ☐ Failure to Accept Responsibility for Behavior
- ☐ Failure to Complete Work
- ☐ Failure to Follow Directions
- ☐ Swearing
- ☐ Excessive Out of Seat
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
- ☐ Rude or Disrespectful Behavior
- ☐ Teasing/Taunting
- ☐ Verbal Aggression/ Threats
- ☐ Excessive Talk-Outs/ Making Noises
- ☐ Lying/Cheating/ Dishonesty
- ☐ Vandalizing or Trespassing
- ☐ Burglary, Robbery, or Theft
- ☐ Temper Tantrum/ Uncontrolled Anger
- ☐ Physical Aggression/ Fighting
- ☐ Gang Activity
- ☐ Arson or Fire Alarm Violation
- ☐ Possession of Controlled Substance Identify: _____
- ☐ Weapons Offense Identify: _____

Consequence Provided:

- ☐ Discussion and Verbal Warning
- ☐ Time-Out from Reinforcement
- ☐ Sent to Office/ Principal Referral
- ☐ Other (specify) _____
- ☐ Loss of Privilege (specify _____)
- ☐ Detention
- ☐ Saturday School
- ☐ Parent Notification
- ☐ Restitution
- ☐ Suspension (specify length: _____ days)
- ☐ Expulsion
- ☐ Police Notification/ Arrest
- ☐ Referral to Outside Agency _____

Alternative Behavior - Specify the desired alternative behavior to be taught and reinforced.

_____

_____

FIGURE 1. Sample Disciplinary Referral Record

whether they represent reasonable and instructional consequences that hold the promise of promoting student success or a relatively limited list of punitive responses designed to simply suppress the display of undesired behavior.

- *Gender, ethnic, and cultural demographics of students referred for disciplinary action.* A review of disciplinary referrals and the

consequences delivered should be aimed at identifying any patterns of differential treatment of students or student groups that might indicate cultural misunderstanding, the misinterpretation of student behavior, or cultural bias.

- *The nature of common offenses.* What are the most common offenses that result in students being referred for disciplinary action? High numbers of referrals for specific problem behaviors will help identify those areas for which students require additional skill instruction. Programs of skill instruction and student behavior monitoring can be implemented to teach and reinforce desired alternative behaviors.
- *The time and location of high-rate or serious behavior problems.* The times and locations of problem behaviors can be used to assist school personnel in the identification of needed behavioral supports and services (e.g., additional staff supervision in the hallways during transition times). Increased skill instruction, supervision, or support can be provided at those times and in those locations that appear to occasion problem behaviors.
- *Teachers and staff members who refer students for disciplinary action.* This information may help identify teachers or other staff members who are in need of additional skill development or support. For example, teachers who refer high numbers of students may lack the skills to avoid power struggles with students or might employ ineffective practices to prevent problem behavior. On the other hand, these teachers may have an unusually challenging group of students who necessitate additional teacher support. Likewise, teachers who display low referral rates may need additional training and support, since a low level of referral does not always signal effective behavior management. In some cases, these teachers may exhibit an unwillingness or inability to enforce behavioral expectations.

Armed with this information, school personnel can identify areas in which current practices appear to be effective as well as those in which current efforts appear inadequate. Together, the staff can work to develop an action plan to address problem areas in a manner designed to encourage student success and the

development of appropriate behavioral alternatives to problem behavior.

Recently, one elementary school faculty found that many of their disciplinary referrals were made by the playground supervisors during recess times and before and after school. A significant number of students appeared to lack the skills needed to handle this unstructured time. Minor behavioral infractions were addressed by having the offenders stand against the wall for 5 minutes before they were allowed to resume play. Repeated or serious behavioral offenses by a student resulted in being sent to the office and loss of playground privileges for a period of 3 days or more. Referral information indicated that these practices were not proving effective in reducing the number of office referrals. In fact, the information indicated that many students with the greatest need for social skill development were routinely being denied the opportunity to interact with their peers during recess.

As a result of the evaluation of referral data, school personnel decided to implement a number of creative practices to improve student discipline. For example:

- The desired behaviors for both students and staff were identified. The principal initiated a series of inservice education seminars for staff members assigned playground duty related to behavior management. These seminars stressed the importance of being predictable when addressing student behavior. In addition, staff practiced addressing students in a caring and respectful manner and using verbal deescalation techniques for those times they were required to intervene with an angry student.
- Each day, at least one of the playground supervisors was assigned to design, initiate, and supervise an enjoyable group activity (e.g., a game of kickball, a series of relay races). A structured activity provided an opportunity for many students to play together with adult support readily available, and a number of students—many with appropriate social skills—elected to participate in this structured activity.
- When students displayed inappropriate playground behavior, they were initially asked to stand against the wall for 5 min-

utes just as before, since this seemed to be effective for the majority of students. Repeated and more serious offenses resulted in assignment to the structured group activity for a period of at least 3 days. The staff member in charge of the group was asked to provide guidance and feedback to the offending students so their assignment to the group related to their interaction with peers and their ability to follow the rules. Thus, students were provided instruction and feedback in the very social problem-solving skills they would need to be successful in unstructured times.

- Playground supervisors identified key skill deficits for high-risk students and informed teachers so that skill instruction and practice could be incorporated into instruction across the day. That is, teachers and related service personnel were expected to directly teach the expected desired behaviors.
- The school social worker decided to use recess as a natural context for social skill instruction and routinely assisted the playground supervisor in the structured group activity. The social worker found the structured play group with the presence of socially skilled children to be a far superior context for skill instruction than artificial groupings comprised solely of children with social skill deficits. The modeling of the other children and the provision of natural reinforcement for desired behavior (e.g., the approval of peers) were effective.

Specification of the most common problem behaviors allows school personnel to identify those areas for which universal prevention and simple intervention programs can be developed. The development of these prevention and intervention programs should take advantage of what we know about human behavior and the process of behavior change.

4

Most Behavior Is Purposeful

The problem behaviors displayed by students are often obvious. The reasons students engage in these behaviors, however, may be more difficult to discern. Like all of us, children and youth have needs and desires. To get these needs and desires met, they behave in certain ways. Much of what we call *misbehavior,* is, for the child, a simple act of attempting to get a need or desire met. A number of common functions for behavior have been postulated (Neel & Cessna, 1993). These include the following:

- Attention.
- Escape or avoidance.
- Power, control, or competence.
- Peer affiliation.
- Self-gratification or self-expression.
- Justice or revenge.

For example, a student who is hungry for peer acceptance may engage in repeated episodes of what appear to be silly and disruptive talk-outs during class. As a result of this behavior, the other students, who typically do not pay much attention to this student, laugh. For the student, having the others laugh at him—even if for only a few brief minutes following each episode of this behavior—may be worth whatever punishment the teacher deems appropriate. In fact, being punished for these humorous actions may serve to elicit additional peer support. Acting as the "class clown" may be the student's only effective means of gaining peer affiliation. Any truly successful effort to reduce this student's behavior will require (a) development of more appropriate

means for the student to acquire peer affiliation and attention, and (b) implementation of procedures to make this class disruption less successful in gaining peer support.

One of the most important philosophical shifts that educators must make as they begin to move away from a punitive approach to discipline toward one that is more proactive and positive is the understanding that most behavior serves a function for the student. Moreover, in most cases, the function serves a legitimate need or desire (e.g., peer affiliation). The specific behavior(s) the student employs to meet these needs is the problem. However, it is unreasonable and sometimes unethical to expect a student to surrender an effective, albeit problematic, means for meeting a legitimate need unless the student is first provided with a reasonable and equally effective alternative means to meet that need. The task confronting the conscientious educator is not simply one of how to stop the undesired behavior, but rather how to promote a socially acceptable means for students to successfully meet their needs.

The school administrator must set the tone for this philosophical shift. The administrator will need to work with his or her staff to establish clearly defined behavioral expectations for both students and staff members. Together, they can work to develop a series of programs and program supports to prevent the display of challenging student behavior and to facilitate direct teaching of expected behavior, monitoring of both student and teacher behavior, and implementation of corrective disciplinary procedures that promote success.

Functional Assessment of Behavior

School personnel should learn to routinely question themselves and gather information that will allow them to understand the function a given behavior serves for the student as they attempt to identify ways to address undesired behavior. When a student displays serious or chronic problem behavior, best practice calls for educators to engage in a functional assessment of that student's behavior. This process explores the behavior in light of the social context in which it occurs to help identify the function of

the behavior and to elucidate the variables in the environment that serve to occasion and maintain the behavior. This formal procedure is typically reserved for those problem behaviors that appear resistant to traditional prevention efforts and universal interventions applied as part of the school-wide discipline program. The 1997 Amendments to IDEA mandate the use of a functional assessment and the development of a behavioral intervention plan for any student with a disability whose behavior impacts his or her learning or that of the student's peers.

The functional assessment of behavior involves any number of possible procedures, depending on the circumstances surrounding the behavior. Regardless of which specific procedures might be employed, the process generally involves the following steps:

- *The specific behavior or behaviors of interest are identified.* Before accurate information can be gathered related to a student's behavior, a clear definition of the target behavior must be developed. The behavior must be described in observable and measurable terms to allow everyone involved to direct his or her attention to the same behavior and to report on its occurrence in a similar manner.
- *An informed hypothesis as to the function the behavior serves is developed.* Initially, the individual or individuals conducting the functional assessment will work with the student and adults who play a significant role in the student's life to identify preliminary hypotheses related to the function(s) the behavior(s) may serve for the student. These constitute the best guess of those familiar with the student.
- *Data are collected and analyzed either to support the hypothesized function or to identify an alternative function.* Data collection might involve reviewing student records; interviewing parents, teachers, other significant adults, and/or the student himself or herself; completing specific rating scales or checklists; and/or directly observing the student within the social context. The selection of the specific data-collection procedures to be used depends on a number of factors, including the nature of the behavior (e.g., high-frequency vs. low-frequency), the setting in which the behavior is most likely displayed

(e.g., public setting vs. private setting), and the student's current placement (e.g., a student may be referred to an alternative setting for safety reasons as the result of the behavior in question and will not be able to be directly observed in the setting where the target behavior took place). Ideally, a minimum of three independent sources of data, each supporting the same function (i.e., triangulation of the data), will be identified prior to the development of the behavior intervention plan.

- *The hypothesis is tested.* When possible, the hypothesis should be tested to provide additional confirmation related to the function of the behavior. For example, if the hypothesized function for a student's behavior (e.g., refusal to complete assigned work) is avoidance (e.g., the student does not want to risk looking incompetent), the teacher might attempt to provide the student with work that is determined to be within the student's current mastery level. If the student complies with this type of task (e.g., one in which he or she can clearly demonstrate competence), it is reasonable to accept the hypothesis that noncompliance for more difficult tasks serves the function of escape or avoidance.
- *The behavior intervention plan is developed.* Once the function of the behavior has been identified, a plan can be developed to alter the student's behavior. As mentioned above, this plan will typically involve two separate but related procedures.
  - *Identification of an acceptable alternative behavior the student may use to meet the function currently being met through the undesired target behavior.* If no such behavior currently exists in the student's repertoire, the student must be taught a new skill. This alternative behavior will need to be encouraged (i.e., occasioned) and systematically reinforced. The teacher should also ensure that the alternative behavior is culturally relevant for the student and that the amount of effort required to employ this response is similar to or less than that of the target response.
  - *Implementation of a plan designed to curtail the effectiveness of the undesired target behavior in meeting the identified function.* This will generally require the application of some specified

consequence each time the behavior is observed. The exact nature of the consequence, however, will depend on the function served by the behavior.

- *The integrity of the implementation of the behavior intervention plan is monitored and its effectiveness is evaluated.* Once developed, the behavioral intervention plan will need to be implemented consistently in the manner prescribed in the plan. Far too often, considerable energy has been expended in conducting a functional assessment of behavior and in the development of a promising behavior intervention plan only to have that plan implemented haphazardly. The implementation should be monitored systematically, and data should be collected to ensure that the desired changes in behavior are taking place.

The Problem with Treating All Children the Same: The Consistency Dilemma

Many school personnel engage in discussions aimed at identifying a unified code of conduct for all students. That is, the school adopts a consistent set of expectations for every student. Such efforts are critical for the development of a positive school climate aimed at the promotion of socially competent behavior (White, Algozzine, Audette, Marr, & Ellis, 2001). Each faculty member and student should be clear about what is expected of him or her in the school setting. In fact, some school-wide discipline systems assess student and faculty awareness of established expectations as one measure of the school climate (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). If teachers and students are unaware of the expectations, there is little likelihood that such expectations will be upheld. Thus, schools should adopt a set of school-wide rules or expectations (e.g., Students will be respectful of themselves and others). Ideally, these rules should (a) be kept to a minimum (e.g., limited to four or five clear statements); (b) indicate what the school wants its students and staff members to do, rather than what it does *not* want them to do; and (c) be stated in terms everyone can understand (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Once developed, these rules will

need to be taught and defined to allow both students and staff members to identify expected behaviors related to each rule as they might be displayed across common situations in the various settings within the school (e.g., classroom, hallways, playground).

Important shareholders in the school (i.e., administrators, school board members, teachers, staff, students, parents, key community members) should participate in the development of these rules and expectations. This will facilitate the development of rules and expectations that are reasonable and clearly understood. More important, the involvement of parents and community members who are representative of the student and community diversity will help ensure that important cultural issues are taken into consideration.

Problems often arise when school personnel attempt to identify a set of standardized consequences for specific rule infractions (e.g., truancy will result in a 1-day suspension). While it is not unreasonable for school personnel to establish some general guidelines related to the nature of the consequences provided for various infractions, students who demonstrate serious or repeated offenses often require a more prescriptive approach to the identification of effective consequences for their behavior. School personnel often make an effort to identify consequences that are consistent across students in the hope that such consequences will be fair to all students. The idea that *fair* means *equal* is a level of moral reasoning typically found in children under 10 years of age (Kohlberg, 1984). In reality, fairness involves giving each student what he or she needs to succeed.

Generally, educators do not have a problem differentiating services when addressing the academic needs of various students. We routinely provide additional support to students who are having academic problems or to those who are gifted, talented, and creative (e.g., extra help, tutoring, more advanced instruction). The idea of individualizing consequences for behavioral infractions, however, often raises serious objections.

Once school personnel have accepted that most student behavior is functional, the problem with efforts to identify standardized consequences for behavioral infractions becomes clear. Different

students can display the same or similar behaviors for different reasons. For example, each of three students may display noncompliant behavior when asked to initiate a math assignment (e.g., "I hate this stuff and I'm not going to do it — I don't have to listen to you!"). The first student does not have the necessary skills to complete the math assignment and thus wishes to avoid looking incompetent (function = escape or avoidance). The second student wishes to obtain increased one-to-one attention from the teacher. He knows that engaging in noncompliant behavior may result in the teacher's working the first few problems with him (function = attention). The third student simply wants to be accepted by these students and will do anything to be seen as part of their group (function = peer affiliation).

In an effort to be consistent, the teacher has determined that such behavior will not be tolerated and any offending student will be sent to the office immediately. While this would be a consistent consequence for all three students, it might not represent an effective intervention for each one of them. Such a reaction might, in fact, increase the likelihood that the undesired behavior will be displayed in the future. The first student is being reinforced (i.e., negative reinforcement) for his behavior because he is being allowed to escape or avoid the distasteful math task. While the teacher may indicate that the student will have to do the work later and thus is not escaping the task, for most students "later is later," and the student will feel relieved. If the second student is interested in obtaining attention from the classroom teacher, being sent to the office might actually prove effective. To ensure effectiveness the teacher would have to (a) provide numerous opportunities for the student to seek teacher attention by employing appropriate behaviors, and (b) make sure adult attention in the office is minimized. The third student may be quite pleased to be sent to the office along with the other two students because this highlights their being together. School personnel often foster the development of peer social networks that support inappropriate behavior as they group offending students together in the delivery of consequences (e.g., in-school suspension programs) or even in the delivery of services aimed to assist in skill development

(e.g., classrooms for students with behavioral disorders, alternative schools, social skill groups). A number of recent studies suggest that programs that place high-risk youth in groups, even for targeted behavior intervention, are more inclined to exacerbate problem behavior (Dishion, McCord, & Poulin, 1999).

Thus, in our example, a consequence thought to be fair and consistent between various students displaying the same behavior was likely to strengthen and increase the display of the problem behavior in two of the three students. Such an approach can hardly be considered fair to these students. Once the function of the behavior is understood, the delivery of a consequence that promotes desired behavior and renders the problem behavior less effective is possible. The exact nature of these consequences, however, may differ on the basis of the function the behavior serves. Consistency within students is critical; consistency between students is often contraindicated.

5

Changing Behavior Is a Process, Not an Event

Human behavior is complex, and we often underestimate the effort required to initiate and maintain any lasting change in behavior. Most educators recognize that much of the challenging behavior displayed by students who are the most at risk appears habitual. That is, it seems to be displayed easily with little forethought. Behavior that is frequently repeated becomes neurologically supported (Sylwester, 1995). The neural pathway that is stimulated when engaging in the particular behavior becomes "programmed" to ease the display of the behavior. That is, the neurons become thicker and develop increased numbers of dendrites to support the rapid transmission of the chemical message from nerve to nerve. Over time, activation of the neurons that control frequently repeated behavioral sequences requires far less stimulation than would be necessary to initiate a new response. This is how much of our behavior becomes habitual or "automatic."

Remember when you first attempted to learn how to drive a car, especially if you learned on a manual transmission? The act of driving required a serious level of concentration and coordinated movements. After driving for a period of time, most of us have had the experience of "waking up on the highway" and wondering exactly where we are. We realize that for a period of time we were driving the car on "automatic pilot." The same automaticity of behavior is at play when students engage in social behavior. When an aggressive student is inadvertently pushed in the hallway, for example, he or she is likely to push the offending student

back. Typically, the student does not enter into a cognitive problem-solving mode when selecting this reaction. The student does not identify a number of behavioral options (e.g., ignore the behavior, tell the student you don't like to be pushed, ask for adult intervention, push the student back) and then select the best choice. He or she has a learned (i.e., automatic) response for what is perceived as a hostile action—push back. Such students are often identified as displaying hostile intent (Dodge & Frame, 1982). That is, these students assume that the vast majority of events that impact their lives are negative in nature and require a defensive response.

Changing this behavior, assuming that it is one of relative long standing, will be no less complex than asking an individual to change the way he writes his name or even the hand with which he uses to write. In many cases, the target behaviors we seek to change through student disciplinary practices are those that our students have learned well and thus are neurologically programmed responses. This does not mean they cannot be changed. It only means that the change is going to require learning a new response in place of the automatic response. Learning is a process; it takes time, planning, effort, and support. The school administrator's job is to establish and model practices that support this process.

Often, teachers and administrators fail to understand the complexity of human behavior in their efforts to curtail undesired behavior. Teachers send a student to the office in hopes that the principal, assistant principal, or dean can miraculously "fix" the student. They appear to desire the implementation of some harsh consequence that will result in an immediate and permanent change in student behavior. As most of us can attest, this "quick fix" simply does not occur. Change in behavior requires a consistent and thoughtful application of effective behavior change procedures.

Behavior Change Involves Learning

As previously discussed, behavior change will frequently require the student to engage in a different, and hopefully a more socially acceptable, response to meet his or her needs and desires.

Moreover, the undesired response must be addressed consistently in a manner that renders it less effective in meeting the student's needs than the alternative desired behavior. Unfortunately, educators sometimes appear to forget everything they know about learning when they address undesired student behavior. If we approached the errors students make in social behavior in a manner similar to our approach to their academic errors, we might be far more effective.

Think back to when you were a small child first learning how to add numbers together. How was this accomplished? Did the teacher simply expect you to already know how this should be done? Hopefully not. Typically, teachers employ a series of manipulatives (e.g., blocks), and once a child has mastered one-to-one correspondence, they begin to show how groups of items can be combined to make larger groups of items. The instruction of this strategy is a critical step in teaching the associative property in addition. Similarly, social problem-solving skills must be directly taught to children. Teachers must take the time to provide meaningful instruction for expected behaviors, especially for those skills that appear to pose difficulty for children.

Returning to our addition example, once the strategy has been taught, the teacher does not simply tell the student to go forth and add. A good teacher provides *a clear description of the skill to be taught, guided practice,* and then a considerable amount of *independent practice* with care to provide *meaningful corrective feedback* and *reinforcement* as needed. How many times do you think you have calculated simple addition problems on various worksheets across your academic career? Most of us have practiced this particular skill thousands of times. Nevertheless, there are times when we still make mistakes (e.g., when adding up the cost of a small number of grocery items in our head or when balancing our checkbook).

Now think about your school as a whole and the various classrooms within your school. How much systematic strategy instruction have you or your teachers provided to your students related to desired social behavior? How is guided and independent practice for these skills arranged? What types of corrective feedback and reinforcement are applied? How frequently are they adminis-

tered? Most schools provide little strategy training for many important social skills. Administrators and teachers simply expect that children have learned the appropriate behavior elsewhere and will display it within the school setting. Reprimands for undesired behavior are more frequently applied than are praise or reinforcement statements for desired behavior (Brophy & Good, 1986; Gunter, Denny, Jack, Shores, & Nelson, 1993; Van Acker et al., 1996; Wehby, Symons, & Shores, 1995). In fact, it is not uncommon for teachers to provide 6 to 10 times more reprimands to students than praise.

The importance of providing systematic instruction and practice of desired social behaviors becomes even more apparent when you think of the ways many students currently address difficult social situations. The problem isn't one of not having a solution. Most have very powerful, although often undesired, solutions to the problems they confront. This is not unlike the student who has learned something incorrectly. For example, taking our former addition problem, let's say the student had been taught 9 as the correct response for the problem 4 + 4 =__. Somehow the school he attended before coming to your school or classroom reinforced this error and inadvertently taught the student that this was the correct response. Would it take more or less instruction to convince the student that 4 + 4 = 8? Obviously, it would take more instruction and more practice for this student because he would have to "unlearn" his incorrect response. The same is true for the student who has learned and been reinforced for an incorrect social behavior or response. Thus, most efforts to address undesired student behavior will ultimately require directly teaching socially desirable alternative behaviors and will call upon teachers to apply what they already know about student learning.

Using the Existing Curriculum to Teach Desired Social Behavior

With the increased demands for academic accountability (e.g., mandated state testing), many teachers do not wish to take time from their students' instructional day to add social skills educa-

tion. These teachers often indicate that they cannot spare the time that such instruction would take away from meaningful academics. What these teachers do not realize is that the typical classroom teacher spends more time addressing student behavior (much of it undesired behavior) than for any curricular area (Brophy & Good, 1986: Goodlad, 1984). Moreover, the vast majority of this effort is spent implementing practices that are seldom effective and that often distract other students from the academic process (see below). Even when schools address these social skill and social problem-solving issues, programs are most often taught once or twice a week by support personnel (e.g., social workers, counselors). Since the classroom teachers are often unaware of the specific curricular issues being discussed, there is little chance that the skills will be systematically called upon and reinforced in the classroom setting.

For children to benefit from instruction in appropriate social behavior, this instruction needs to be integrated across the school day, in each subject and in each setting. Again, returning to our addition example, suppose a teacher required and reinforced the correct response of 8 (to the problem 4 + 4 = _) in math class, but allowed the student to provide any number of responses throughout the rest of the day for this same problem. Would this likely impact the student's learning? Of course it would. The need for the supported generalization of a skill is critical, especially during the acquisition phase of skill development.

Almost any curricular area provides opportunities for the direct instruction of expected and desired behavior. The school administrator, along with the staff, may wish to explore the nature of the common behavior problems identified in their review of the school's disciplinary referral data and the behaviors staff have identified as expected of all students. Together, the faculty can identify ways students could be provided direct instruction in the expected and desired behaviors. For example, if a number of students appear to lack the ability to take another person's perspective in a social problem situation, teachers could seek to employ stories in their reading and language arts classes that have this as a theme. Various bibliotherapy resources could be consulted to

find reading materials with a given theme at the desired grade levels. In addition, teachers can identify instructional practices that will allow students to learn and practice the skills being taught (e.g., role playing, group discussion, peer tutoring, cooperative learning). Teachers can establish natural learning opportunities that call upon students to use the skill. For instance, a student who has difficulty with sharing, but who has been provided instruction in this skill, might be paired with another student in an art project that requires sharing materials and space. The teacher prearranges this encounter at a time when he or she is available to provide guidance and feedback. Given time and support from administration, teachers can become creative and adept at developing ways to provide academic and social skill instruction within the same lesson.

Developing Effective Consequences to Reduce Undesired Behavior

Despite the staff's best efforts in the prevention of disruptive and challenging behavior, there will be times when students engage in these behaviors and disrupt the school or classroom. At these times, an appropriate consequence must be selected. Generally, dangerous, destructive, and disruptive responses require some sort of direct consequence, since planned ignoring could result in an increase in disruption and/or in someone being harmed or injured.

When selecting a consequence for a given target behavior, there are several things that must be considered.

- *Does the student understand what behavior is expected of him or her and does the student have the skills to display the expected behavior?* Obviously, the consequence for a student who does not understand what is expected or who cannot display the expected behavior must involve instruction in the desired behavior. Sometimes a clarification of the direction and some supportive guidance is all that is needed.
- *What function does the target behavior appear to serve for the child?* As discussed previously, the same behavior displayed by two

different children could serve very different functions. One child might display noncompliance as a means of escaping a given task (due to lack of ability or lack of motivation), while another child might display this same behavior to gain attention from the teacher and/or the peer group. One must understand the function a behavior might serve to ensure that the consequence provided in an effort to decrease the behavior does not inadvertently satisfy this function, thereby promoting the display of the behavior. For example, if a student were displaying a given problem behavior to escape a situation, we would not want the consequence to result in the student's being allowed to escape (e.g., being sent to the office, suspension from school).

- *Are alternative desired behaviors that serve the same function being taught and promoted?* If the student seeks attention, we must help him or her develop a means to gain the desired attention in an appropriate manner. In contrast, a student who is seeking increased power and control by refusing to complete his work could (prior to the display of the undesired behavior) be provided a choice of assignments that would allow him to demonstrate mastery of the material (e.g., select one of the two assignments: complete a worksheet or write a short essay). The ability to choose satisfies the student's need for power and control, and yet he engages in a task that allows the teacher to evaluate his mastery of the material being taught.

Effective consequences should meet the following criteria:

- *Consequences should maximize efforts to protect, preserve, and strengthen the relationship the teacher has developed with the child.* This doesn't mean that the teacher should overlook a problem behavior in hopes that the student will feel better about him or her; rather, the teacher should provide a predictable response to the undesired behavior aimed at promoting student learning and success. The consequence must be reasonable and delivered with care to show respect and concern for the child. Students with challenging behavior need to be encouraged to develop closer bonds with school personnel. Too often, we

employ punishment that serves to alienate these students from the school and teachers.

- *The consequence should provide an opportunity to learn the necessary skill to prevent future occurrences of the undesired behavior (i.e., strategy instruction).*
- *The consequence should allow the student to practice a skill or strategy that will prevent future occurrences of the undesired behavior.*
- *The consequence should minimize student resistance.* That is, care should be taken to employ consequences that can be delivered in private and/or that allow the student to alter his or her behavior without losing face in front of peers. In addition, the consequence should not involve the delivery of such an aversive response that the student is likely to escalate his or her problem behavior in an effort to escape or avoid the consequence.
- *The consequence should be reasonable and capable of being delivered easily following each occurrence of the target behavior(s).* The predictability of a consequence is critical for desired effectiveness. If delivery of the consequence requires significant effort on the part of the teacher, there is a greater likelihood that the consequence will not be provided in a consistent and predictable manner.

As Educators, We Seem to Forget What We Know About Learning When We Address Behavior

We often find distinct differences when we compare common error-correction procedures that school personnel apply for academic errors with procedures to address errors in social behavior. One might ask: If the procedures we use for social behavior are so effective, why don't we employ similar methods when addressing academic behavior? Four important error-correction procedural differences will be discussed here: the identification of what constitutes an acceptable response; the delivery of warnings; the rapid escalation of the aversiveness of the consequence; and the removal of a student as a consequence.

Identification of What Constitutes an Acceptable Response

When addressing an academic response, teachers typically have a relatively clear idea of what they will accept. This might involve questions that have only one acceptable response (e.g., 4 + 4 = __) or questions that require the application of a complex rubric to determine correct responding. Regardless, teachers seem to have little difficulty in discerning a correct from an incorrect response. This does not appear to be the case when we observe teachers attempting to address social behavior. Teachers often will vacillate considerably on which social behaviors they select to address across time and across children. For example, a teacher may select to reprimand a student for talking out on one occasion but verbally praise a correct response that is called out by the same student moments later.

Returning to our math example, suppose you are attempting to teach 4 + 4 = 8, and the student incorrectly responds with 9. Most teachers would not indicate that 9 was close enough and move on. They would provide some form of an academic correction. If the teacher did not hold a clear understanding of what constituted a correct response and instead allowed the acceptable behavior to vary from situation to situation (e.g., sometimes accepting a 9, 5, 11, or 12, and yet other times demanding an 8), it would significantly interfere with learning. The same is true with social behavior; however, as school personnel we often shift our behavioral expectations of children (e.g., sometimes accepting talk-outs and other times reprimanding this behavior). It may be little wonder that some students have a difficult time understanding the expectations we hold for them.

Use of Warnings as a Consequence

One of the most common forms of reprimand provided to students who engage in an inappropriate social behavior involves the delivery of a warning or threat of the delivery of an aversive consequence should the behavior continue. Often teachers resort to warnings or threats because they feel they have limited options. They therefore threaten the delivery of highly aversive conse-

quences, knowing that the specified consequences can be delivered only sparingly (e.g., "Do you want to be sent to the principal's office?" "One more time young man and I'm going to call your parents?"). Often both the teacher and the student are aware that the consequence is unlikely to be administered.

Returning to addition again, if the student responded to the problem of 4 + 4 = __ with 9, few teachers would simply warn him that this is an incorrect response (e.g., "John '9' is incorrect, I'm going to let it go this time, but if you respond '9' in the future I will have to mark it wrong"). Instead, most teachers simply mark the incorrect answer wrong or indicate that the response was incorrect. This consequence is quick and predictable, and it typically does not result in the escalation of problem behavior. If a student were displaying a high rate of errors, the teacher might initiate more intensive instruction while reducing the level of task difficulty. Alternatively, a teacher might initiate some guided practice or employ errorless learning strategies that prompt the student to display the desired correct response. The same procedures have been shown to be effective when addressing social behavior. *Precorrection*, defined as the delivery of a warning or a prompt just prior to the initiation of a difficult social situation (e.g., "We are going to the library. Remember, we don't talk in the library"), has been found to reduce the display of problem behavior effectively (Colvin, Sugai, & Patching, 1993). Thus, warnings are effective if given prior to the display of an undesired behavior, but not as the consequence for an undesired behavior.

Rapid Escalation of the Aversiveness of a Consequence for Repeated Errors

Another common practice found in many schools involves the use of a rapid escalation in the aversiveness of consequences delivered for errors in social behavior. For example, many schools continue to employ Lee Canter's program of assertive discipline (Canter & Canter, 1997). This program calls for teachers to clearly identify their classroom rules. The first time a student engages in a behavior that violates a rule, his or her name is recorded. This serves as a warning and carries no real consequence (we dis-

cussed the problem with this practice earlier). The second time the student breaks a rule, he or she loses a specified privilege (e.g., the loss of 5 minutes of recess). A third infraction results in the loss of even more privileges. A fourth infraction results in the student's parents being called, and a fifth rule violation results in the student's being sent to the principal's office.

A number of potential problems arise with such a rapidly escalating program of consequences. First, those students who are most at risk for displaying challenging behaviors tend to display many high-rate problem behaviors. For some students, the display of five rule violations would take place prior to lunch on a daily basis. If a program similar to Canter's were enforced predictably, a significant number of students would be sitting in the principal's office each day awaiting phone calls to their parents. Typically, teachers are aware of this dilemma and begin the process of repeated warnings and threats discussed above (e.g., "Do you want your name on the board?"). In some situations, the stakes involved in the escalation of consequences are even higher. For example, it is not unusual to find a few students in a given middle or high school who are being provided increasingly lengthy suspensions for the display of challenging behavior. A review of discipline referrals in one high school found a young lady who had been given more than 45 days of suspension in this escalating manner with no apparent impact on the display of the target behavior. This practice often results in the further destruction of the bond between the student and school personnel.

As we have discussed, this is an error-correction procedure that is significantly different from that employed in academics. We would not mark the first error on an addition worksheet wrong once, mark the second error wrong twice, and the third error three times. Each error is provided the same error-correction procedure—it is marked wrong one time. We realize that errors are a part of the learning process and apply a simple error-correction procedure to provide feedback. Learning takes time. This is not to say that frequent and repeated errors will not result in the student's being given a failing grade, but hopefully the student initially will be provided an opportunity for increased instruction

and support to promote his or her academic success. Similarly, repeated behavioral errors might result in the loss of certain privileges, but more intensive consequences should be coupled with more intensive support services.

Removal of a Student as a Consequence

There will be times when a student becomes so disruptive or when a student's behavior becomes so intense that he or she must be removed from the instructional situation. Even with the best preventative and proactive programs in place, crisis situations will arise. The school should have a crisis intervention plan in place. This plan should (a) identify staff members who can be called upon for assistance and who have the skills needed to address the crisis situation (e.g., are knowledgeable in verbal deescalation and physical restraint procedures), (b) identify a location where the student can be taken (or where the other students can be taken) so that the problem can be resolved, and (c) specify the necessary procedures to successfully reintroduce the student back into the classroom or school setting. Removal of the student should be accomplished quickly and with as little disruption to the classroom or school setting as possible. Safety of the students and staff should be the paramount concern, and this includes the safety of the disruptive student. Care and concern for the student should be displayed at all times along with clear and calm statements of expected behavior. A show of force is seldom the answer when attempting to address the needs of an emotionally distraught student.

Removal of a student from the instructional setting should be considered a crisis intervention procedure and not a solution to the problem. Whenever a student displays behavior that requires his or her removal from the classroom or school, the teacher and the administration must examine the situation in an effort to prevent future behavior of this magnitude. While removal from the instructional setting cannot always be prevented, behavioral episodes that result in removal call for increased examination of the learning and school environment in an effort to identify factors that occasion the student's behavior. Repeated episodes of

behavior so extreme that it requires a student to be removed from the instructional setting and that cannot be remedied through preventative efforts (e.g., increased accommodations and support) may signal the need to reevaluate the student's educational placement. Is this the least restrictive environment for the student? Are we attempting to require more of the student than might be reasonable given the nature of his or her individualized educational needs? These are serious questions and should involve a multidisciplinary team of school personnel, the student (if possible), and the student's parents in efforts to find the appropriate answers.

Instructional Consequences for Undesired Social Behavior

Schools across the country are beginning to develop and implement what might be termed pedagogical or instructional consequences. These consequences for undesired social behavior build upon what educators know about learning. They address errors in social behavior in a manner not unlike the manner in which effective teachers address academic errors. These consequences provide intensive strategy instruction, repeated practice, and supportive feedback to foster the development of desired alternative behaviors. One high school in the Chicago area encourages students who are referred for fighting to participate in an intensive anger management program in lieu of a 3-day suspension. Likewise, students who display insubordinate behavior are provided an opportunity to engage in lessons designed to assist them in dealing with authority. At the same time, these students might be provided teacher mentors. A mentor would be a faculty member who can provide the student with unconditional positive regard and social support on a daily basis. Earlier discussion of the school employing instruction within a structured play group during recess for students who violate playground rules would be another example of the use of an instructional consequence for problem social behavior.

School administrators might want to take some time and work with their staff as a whole (or the faculty assigned to the school's discipline committee) to review the list of common infractions that lead students to be referred for discipline in their school to identify potential instructional alternatives to punishment. This process could be made even more effective through efforts to combine skill instruction with activities designed to meet some of the common functions served by behavior (e.g., attention, control, escape, affiliation). Teachers and staff members could work closely with administrators to identify a variety of instructional consequences and preventative activities that would also allow students to address the needs and desires currently met through undesired behavior.

For instance, a student who seeks power and control through verbal and physical aggression might be incorporated into a school's peer mediation team (Daunic, Smith, Robinson, Miller, & Landry, 2000). Peer mediation teams are generally composed of students with leadership potential. These students work in pairs to help students who have been referred due to social disputes identify solutions to the disputes that allow each to feel successful. When incorporating students with social problem-solving deficits, the key is to pair them with socially skilled partners during mediations. A staff member is typically assigned to the mediation team to provide support and guidance. Involvement with this group of students would allow the student who has problems with aggression to demonstrate leadership while providing him the opportunity to learn social problem-solving strategies and to engage in a number of social problem-solving activities (e.g., peer mediation instruction as well as the act of mediation with other, socially skilled students). Over the course of the year, this student might become involved in as many as 30 social problems—none of them his. He will have been actively involved in a structured activity with a number of peers who probably possess a very different set of norms and beliefs about the use of aggression as a means to solve social problems. Involvement with this social network of students will likely alter his own beliefs about aggression and improve his ability to solve problems prosocially.

Nothing Succeeds Like Success

Promote Academic Competence

One of the most important, and often one of the easiest, interventions that should be implemented within any school-wide or classroom disciplinary program involves efforts to promote the academic success of all students. Most students do not rebel against someone who helps them feel competent and successful. Teachers and administrators should monitor student achievement closely. Students who are displaying academic problems or who are failing academically should be targeted for assistance (e.g., peer tutoring, intensive instruction) before falling too far behind. We should encourage teachers to routinely employ mastery learning (Guskey, 1990), curriculum-based assessment and instructional probes (Shapiro, 1989), and other empirically validated methods to identify students who need increased support.

While state standards exist to guide curriculum, administrators and teachers have significant control over the instructional approaches taken to foster student learning. Nevertheless, teachers are confronted with increasingly diverse classes and may lack an appreciation for the learning and instructional needs of many of their students. Often lessons are designed with little regard for the instructional needs of the learners in the classroom who are at risk for behavior problems. As a result, student participation and learning may fall short of the anticipated outcomes.

Administrators should encourage teachers to become familiar with the learning characteristics of their students and to seriously consider these characteristics when designing lessons. Appendix A provides a simple grid system that allows teachers to list their students along with some of the critical student characteristics that will impact their ability to meet the demands of a given lesson. Once this form is completed, teachers can quickly identify students who will require accommodations or modifications as they develop lesson plans for their students. For example, if a lesson requires students to read an extensive written passage (at the fourth-grade level) and write a short essay that critiques the passage, the teacher would need to identify students who might lack

the necessary skills to succeed. Students who have decoding or reading comprehension skills significantly below the fourth-grade level, those with an inability to attend throughout the length of the lesson, and those who have problems with written expression would require supports and accommodations (e.g., alternative reading material, assignment to a peer dyad, small-group instruction, shortened lesson). These supports and accommodations could be arranged prior to the initiation of the lesson to ensure each student's success. Far too often, supports are not provided until after the student has failed.

Ideally, students should experience a 75% to 90% correct response rate. When correct responding falls below the 75% level, students often become discouraged. Rates of correct responding above 90% may result in the student's becoming bored. When a teacher provides a student with an opportunity to respond, care should be taken to ensure that the question provides the student with a reasonable chance for success. An effective way to begin to change the behavior of a student who displays challenging behavior is to actively involve him or her in the lesson, providing a rich variety of opportunities for the student to demonstrate academic competence. This calls for the teacher's strategic use of attention to the needs and abilities of the students in the class. Given that students are compelled to attend school, ethically we must make every effort to foster their success. Administrators, teachers, and staff are the only volunteers in the school setting. Thus, the responsibility for promoting student success rests with the adults in the school.

Promote Academic Improvement

Another easily instituted change to help promote student success is the adoption of programs that formally and informally reward academic improvement. Schools typically have numerous programs to reward high achievement and academic excellence, but they often overlook improvement. A simple test for a school or classroom involves asking "If a student moves from a very low failing grade to a very high failing grade, is the improvement acknowledged in any meaningful way?" A change from a low F to

a high F often involves a far greater level of improvement than moving from a B to an A, yet the latter is often celebrated while the former is ignored. Although many at-risk students will never excel academically, every one of them can improve. Administrators should work with teachers and staff to identify ways to identify, acknowledge, and celebrate student improvement (as well as excellence) within the school and classroom.

PART TWO

6

Changing Student Behavior Typically Requires Changing Teacher Behavior

Perhaps the most important and most difficult task of the school administrator related to the development and implementation of an effective school-wide and classroom discipline program involves monitoring teacher and staff behavior. The success of any program of discipline will ultimately rest upon the willingness and ability of the teachers and staff to implement the procedures outlined in the plan. Lack of the necessary skills, misunderstanding of expectations, or a basic unwillingness of teachers and staff to implement the program can threaten a school administrator's best efforts to implement an effective discipline program. Likewise, staff behavior that belittles, embarrasses, or demeans students will undermine school-wide efforts to support student success.

Most teachers dedicate themselves to delivering the best possible instruction. Even so, each teacher and administrator reading this monograph is probably aware of one or more teachers who routinely scream at children as a means to control classroom behavior. Other teachers may engage in behavior that embarrasses students. For example, I have seen teachers call upon students whom they suspect are not paying attention—asking them to read the next paragraph, respond to a question, or comment on the class discussion. They anticipate that the student will be unable to respond correctly and hope that, by embarrassing the student,

they will cause him or her to be more attentive in the future. Are these types of teacher behavior effective? Are they ethical? Do they promote student success and an increased bonding between the student and the teacher? The answer is a resounding *"No."*

Unfortunately, in most schools teachers do not confront one another over the display of these types of behavior, and most school administrators will not directly address teachers who engage in them. So who must face the teacher who screams? The answer is the students. Unfortunately, many administrators seem to have no problem in sending students, some of whom display significant learning problems, into such a teacher's classroom each day. Teachers who display ineffective instructional and behavior management skills greatly diminish the quality of the school climate for all students and for all faculty.

Why do these teachers engage in these behaviors? Did they select teaching as a profession to fulfill their desire to scream and embarrass children? Probably not. Teachers who display these behaviors typically are frustrated. They want to do a good job but may lack the skills or motivation to engage in more effective teaching strategies. If they are to become more effective, the administrator must actively address the issue of teacher and staff behavior. The administrator's role in addressing teacher and staff behavior requires (a) identification of expected behaviors, (b) monitoring of teacher behavior, (c) implementation of programs to directly teach these expected behaviors if needed, and (d) provision of supports to foster the desired outcomes. If this sounds familiar, it is because the process is not unlike that previously discussed to address challenging student behavior.

Identifying Expected Adult Behavior

As with the identification of expected student behavior, administrators, together with teachers and staff, will need to identify the behavior that will be expected of the adults in the school setting (e.g., Treat students with respect at all times). Data derived from the school discipline referrals, student progress and achievement records, and both formal and informal observation of student and

teacher interaction can be used to inform the process of identifying expected behavior. The faculty should be asked to participate in an honest examination of the role of adult behavior in the school. For example, many faculty members identify student disrespect as a critical concern in the school. Most teachers suggest that an attitude of respect and the skill of respectful behavior should be taught at home. Obviously, however, some students have not learned to respect adults in their homes. They certainly are not going to learn to display respect for authority from outside educational sources such as television. The school may be the only possible location for these students to learn this important skill. Consider your school and those students most likely to display disrespectful behavior. Do the adults in your school consistently address these students in a respectful manner? Hopefully, you can answer in the affirmative. But if we are honest, many schools would have to admit that while most students are dealt with respectfully, some of the students who are most at risk experience a very different learning situation.

Monitoring Teacher Behavior

As I have stressed before, behavior change is a complex and often difficult task. This is as true for teachers as it is for students. The need for monitoring teacher behavior and providing clear, honest, and frequent feedback is critical. Teachers cannot observe themselves teaching. They are dependent on others to provide the feedback they need to enhance their instruction. Unfortunately, far too little administrator time is devoted to the task of monitoring and supervising instruction. Much of the time administrators spend addressing minor disciplinary incidents could be recouped if they routinely provided teachers with useful feedback about their interactions with students.

When monitoring teacher behavior, it is essential to collect data that allow teachers to see the relationship between their behavior and that of their students. Effective data collection allows the administrator the opportunity to share the data and to sit beside the teacher as they attempt to interpret its implications.

Talk-out	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Consequence	1	2	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	3	4	1	1	3

1 = verbal reprimand, 2 = ignore, 3 = positive or desired social response, 4 = time-out (5 min)

FIGURE 2. Student Talk-outs and Consequences Delivered

The presentation of intelligible data often can go a long way in presenting the facts, freeing the administrator to support teachers and staff in the process of needed change.

One simple method of data collection has proven useful in helping teachers and staff identify the effectiveness of their behavior management efforts. This involves recording each incident of a target behavior and the consequence the teacher delivers following that behavior. For example, the data displayed in Figure 2 represent the number of times a student engaged in talking out during class. Often these talk-outs were inappropriate and the teacher indicated that they distracted her and the other students.

Examine the data presented in Figure 2. What can you say about the nature of the consequences provided for this target behavior? Is there a predictable consequence for student behavior? Are the teacher's efforts likely to result in the desired change in student behavior? The student would be hard pressed to predict the consequence for her behavior. The teacher does not appear to have a clear understanding of the function this behavior serves for the student. Does the student want attention, escape, both, or something else altogether? Approximately 25% of the time, the teacher responds to the student's talk-outs as if this were an appropriate way to get the teacher's attention (i.e., provides a desired social response). Thus, the teacher is inadvertently providing the student with intermittent reinforcement—a procedure far more likely to strengthen the display of the behavior than to eliminate it. Is there any reason this student should alter her behavior? Not as long as the behavior continues to be effective, and it will remain effective until the teacher changes her own behavior. Thus, student behavior change often is predicated on a change in teacher behavior.

When exploring the social context of the classroom for students who display challenging behaviors, it is sometimes helpful to examine the target student's academic participation and success in comparison to other students. This can be done by collecting data for short periods of time (e.g., 20 min) during instruction. These data are collected on all students in the classroom and focus on classroom participation and teacher response to student behavior. The data-collection procedure calls for the observer to simply make a sketch of the classroom and indicate each time a student is provided any of the following:

- *An opportunity to respond academically (OTR).* The student is provided an opportunity to actively engage in the lesson by reading aloud or by giving an answer or otherwise being asked to contribute orally to the academic task at hand.
- *Verbal praise for an academic response ($VP^{+}A$).* The student is praised or otherwise acknowledged for an academic response (e.g., answer to a question, contribution to the class discussion).
- *Verbal praise for desired behavior ($VP^{+}B$).* The student is praised or otherwise acknowledged for a social behavioral response (e.g., putting materials away when asked, sharing with a neighbor).
- *Verbal reprimand for undesired behavior ($VR^{-}B$).* The student is reprimanded or otherwise corrected for a social behavioral response (e.g., playing with a pen, distracting a neighbor).
- *An academic correction (AC^{-}).* The student is provided information that indicates the academic response provided was incorrect (e.g., "No, that's not right. The answer is 8").

Figure 3 shows a sample classroom sketch. The data are collected through simple event recording. That is, the sketch of each student's desk is divided into five parts, each assigned to one of the response categories. Any time a student is provided a target response it is simply marked on his or her desk on the sketch in the appropriate area. (Note: For the purposes of this illustration three desks have been enlarged outside of the classroom sketch.)

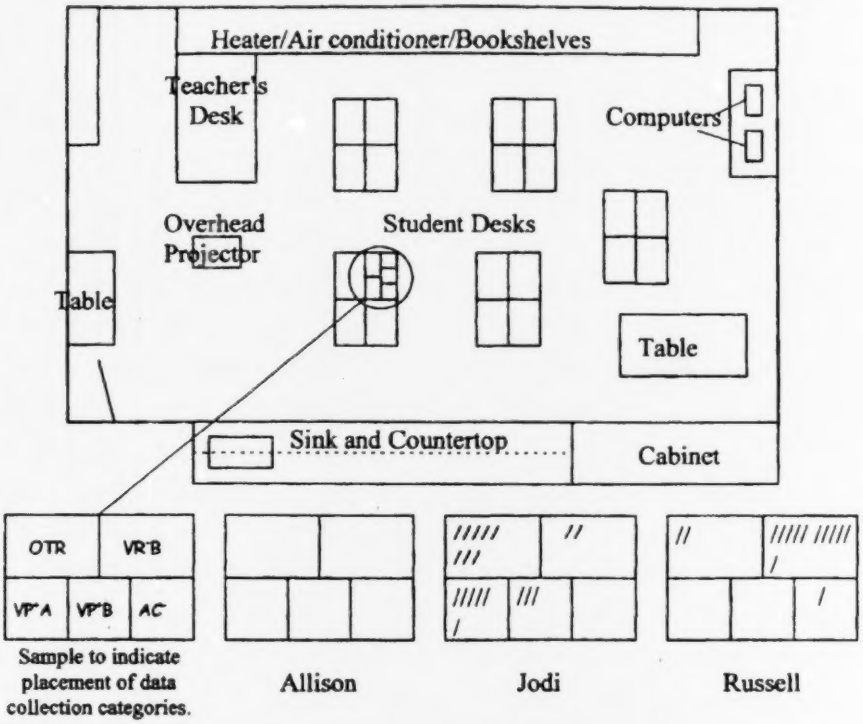

FIGURE 3. Sample Classroom Sketch/Academic Participation Data

These types of data can be very informative. The sketch of the classroom allows for an examination of potential problems associated with classroom layout (e.g., arrangement of desks, location of instructional materials). The data related to participation allow an exploration of student and teacher interaction. What are the messages we give various students? Assume that the data presented in the three desks drawn below the classroom sketch represent the outcome data for three students collected over a 20-min period. What do these data suggest?

Allison appears to have found a way to make herself invisible. During the entire 20-min period, she was not provided a single opportunity to respond, nor did she receive any praise or reprimand from the teacher. Allison was allowed to be an inactive learner. The teacher has little information from which to judge Allison's grasp of the content covered during instruction. Jodi, on

the other hand, was actively engaged in the lesson. She was provided numerous opportunities to respond, and her level of correct responding (based on praise for academic responding vs. academic correction) suggests that she is mastering the content.

Russell appears to be displaying some challenging behavior. Over the period of the 20-min observation, he was reprimanded for his behavior a total of 11 times—more than once every 2 min. When examining these data, the teacher and administrator would probably agree that this student has some problems. Since the teacher must stop teaching to provide a reprimand, it is clear that Russell's behavior is having a distracting influence on the lesson. As we explore the data further, we can see that Russell obtains considerable attention by engaging in this problem behavior (i.e., he is attended to more than once every 2 minutes). Could teacher attention serve as a reinforcer for Russell's disruptive behavior? Alarmingly, he was provided no attention for desired behavior. His active involvement in the class interaction was minimal, as evidenced by the fact that he was given only two opportunities to respond. Also, he provided an incorrect response to at least one of these questions. Thus, he does not appear to be having much academic success. If gaining attention were the reason behind Russell's behavior, he was provided far too little opportunity to gain attention through appropriate behavior. His inappropriate behavior, however, appears to be quite effective in meeting his needs.

Perhaps the most important information that can be gained from an examination of these data relates to the effectiveness of the current intervention. In the case of Russell, verbal reprimand was not proving effective. It is unlikely that the 12th or 13th reprimand would lead Russell to the realization that he should refrain from inappropriate behavior. At the same time, such a high rate of reprimands suggests that the teacher was putting forth considerable effort to address this behavior. Unfortunately, the intervention was ineffective and failed to consider the function of Russell's behavior.

Finally, the data suggest that Russell was given ample information to suggest that whatever he did at school, he didn't do it

very well. In this brief 20-min observation, Russell received 12 failure messages (i.e., 11 reprimands for behavior and 1 academic correction) and no messages of success. Yet tomorrow his teacher will likely expect Russell to come to school enthusiastic and ready to learn. Will the messages he receives tomorrow be any different from those delivered today?

Viewed together, these data could allow the administrator and the teacher to develop a potentially effective behavior intervention plan. Russell appears to have a relatively high need for attention. It is not likely his need will be reduced until he begins to have a greater sense of accomplishment and belonging within the classroom and school. Thus, he will need to be given attention about once every 2 minutes at least at the start of the intervention period. Some teachers might feel that they do not have the time to attend to students like Russell every 2 minutes. The data, however, suggest otherwise. The teacher already is providing this level of attention. Accordingly, the goal is to shift this attention away from the undesired behavior toward a desired alternative behavior.

The teacher might indicate that Russell does not display enough desired behavior to warrant positive attention every 2 minutes. In this case, the teacher will need to occasion such opportunities. The teacher could call on Russell more frequently, being careful to provide him with opportunities to respond that have a strong likelihood of success. In this way, the teacher provides Russell with attention when she delivers the opportunity to respond and additional attention when she praises his correct responding. Increasing the number of opportunities for Russell to respond and to praise him for correct responding does not detract from instruction, while delivering reprimands requires a disruption in the flow of instruction. The teacher also can attend to Russell through acknowledgment. That is, the teacher can give Russell attention that involves the simple exchange of social information during noninstructional times (e.g., "Hi Russell, did you go to the football game last night?").

Once a behavioral intervention plan is developed, it will be the administrator's responsibility to provide the teacher with the needed instruction (if the teacher lacks the appropriate knowl-

edge or skill), monitoring, and support to facilitate the implementation of the plan.

Directly Teaching Expected Teacher Behavior

Most classroom teachers have had little formal education related to addressing the challenging behavior of their students. Most general education teachers have not had one class discussion related to procedures for addressing student resistance, yet teachers confront resistant students almost daily in the classroom. School-wide inservice education will need to be scheduled to provide instruction in procedures to address challenging behavior and to promote student social and academic success. The exact nature of this inservice education should be guided by the review of student discipline referrals, student achievement data, and the expected behavior identified for both students and teachers. Effective instructional methodologies, curriculum-based assessment, development of lesson plans for the diverse classroom, basic behavior management, avoidance of power struggles, verbal deescalation, and crisis intervention procedures may be topics identified in some schools.

Let us assume that the discipline referral information for a particular school demonstrates a highly significant overrepresentation of African American and Hispanic students being referred for discipline. Moreover, these students are more likely to be suspended from school than other students for similar offenses. The administrator might consider increasing inservice programming related to an examination of the impact of culture on behavior. Often, differential treatment of students results not from intentional bias or prejudice, but from cultural misunderstanding.

Demographic shifts in the population of the United States have resulted in an increased number of students from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups entering the public schools. Due to changes in social policy, the general education classroom has become the placement option of choice for the vast majority of students with special needs. Thus, the general education classroom is becoming increasingly diverse, requiring teachers to

demonstrate a broader spectrum of knowledge and skills. School administrators will need to ensure that teachers are provided the education and training they need to meet the diverse needs of the students placed in their classrooms.

School improvement plans must be developed that provide a continued commitment of time and resources to the development of the knowledge and skills required to establish a school-wide and classroom discipline program that fosters student *and* teacher success. The development of a school climate that encompasses high-quality instruction, concern for all students and staff, and the effective prevention and treatment of problem behavior will likely take a school 3 to 5 years of sustained effort (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Schools that experience high student mobility and/or high staff turnover will need to implement a system of continuous evaluation and education to ensure that new students and staff members understand expected behavior. Keeping positive and proactive discipline procedures an instructional priority is a key responsibility of the school administrator.

Developing Supports for Teachers and Staff

Change does not happen just because we acknowledge that it is needed. Typically, school personnel will have to develop plans and actively support change. Both teachers and students may need accommodations and systematic monitoring to provide feedback related to behavioral change. Some teachers may engage in a particular behavior that, while effective for most students, interferes with the learning of some specific students. The goal of monitoring is not to identify poor teachers or generally ineffective teaching, but to provide teachers with information and feedback related to their teaching. The purpose of providing feedback is to assist the teacher in the identification of more effective teaching strategies for all students. This type of monitoring is needed by excellent teachers as well as less effective teachers and by experienced teachers as well as new teachers.

As previously discussed, the administrator must play a critical role in the monitoring and supervision of teacher and staff behavior. However, few, if any, administrators have all the time needed to teach, monitor, and provide feedback on the expected teacher and staff behaviors. Moreover, many teachers will be more open to feedback from someone other than the person responsible for their evaluation. Thus, school administrators may wish to develop systems of teacher monitoring and support in addition to what they provide.

Some schools have adopted strategies that allow teachers to obtain systematic feedback from fellow teachers—for example, a peer collaboration system in which teacher triads are developed to observe and provide feedback to one another. Each member in the triad surrenders a part of one of his or her planning periods each week (i.e., approximately 30 min per week) to observe another member of the triad. Thus, once every 3 weeks, each teacher is visited at different times by two other teachers. These teachers might be directed by the host teacher to observe specific interactions (e.g., "Help me with my approach to Johnny"), or observations may be undirected. Each observer is required to identify at least two areas of strength and two areas that could be improved related to the host's interaction with students. In one study, a system similar to this was supported as part of a violence prevention intervention program (Grant, Van Acker, Guerra, Duplechain, & Cohen, 1998). This system was so successful in participating schools that 5 years after the sponsored intervention ended, more than 53% of the teachers were still participating in the collaboration program with no direct administrative support.

Other school systems have identified specific staff members to serve as teacher support personnel. These individuals can be asked to observe classroom interaction to help teachers identify areas of instruction or management that may need modification. Often, schools make this type of observation a requirement as a part of the teacher assistance team/prereferral intervention process. These individuals often play an integral part in the data collection related to the functional behavior assessments conducted in the school. In fact, as part of their school-wide discipline

program, some schools have adopted automatic triggers that will serve to initiate an observation and teacher collaboration intervention. One local district requires classroom observations for any student following a third referral to the office for discipline or receipt of a failure notice in class. An observation also is required the fifth time a teacher refers a student or students to the office. This might indicate a teacher who was assigned a particularly difficult group of students, or perhaps a teacher who is more prone to power struggles with students. In either case, the teacher needs support.

Another useful strategy is to create a school climate that encourages teachers and other staff members to engage in self-examination through making and systematically reviewing audio- or videotapes of their own interactions with students. A teacher could place a small tape recorder on a shelf and capture the interaction that takes place over a 2-hour period. Listening to the tape, the teacher can identify aspects of his or her teaching that appear to be effective as well as those that are ineffective.

Technology can assist in teacher support procedures in other ways too. In situations similar to that encountered in the classroom shown in Figure 3, in an effort to change Russell's behavior the teacher will need to shift attention away from Russell's undesired behavior and toward desired alternative behaviors. Given Russell's need for high rates of attention, the teacher might inadvertently fail to occasion and/or attend to desired behavior given the complexity of the task of providing a lesson to the class. Providing the teachers with a small beeper/timer (e.g., Vibrating Timer from Control Company®) that can be slipped into a pocket can serve as an inexpensive but useful support. This unit can be set to vibrate on a repeated cycle of predetermined length (e.g., every 3 minutes), and the vibration will help cue the teacher to attend to Russell.

Some schools have adopted a "bug in the ear" technique to assist teachers in their efforts to change their instructional and/or management behavior. In this approach, the observer (e.g., a peer mentor) sits in the back of the room and uses a small radio transmitter/receiver unit to quietly talk to the teacher, who also wears

a transmitter/receiver. This allows the teacher to obtain guidance and feedback immediately. The mentor can "walk" the teacher through the desired approach to instruction or management of a given student or students. Inexpensive two-way communication systems can be purchased at electronics stores (e.g., Radio Shack ®).

Efforts to support teachers and staff must not be seen as a means to ferret out poor teachers. Providing support structures and feedback through collaboration is not evaluation. As mentioned previously, teaching is a complex endeavor; teachers cannot be expected to have all of the knowledge and skills needed to address the unique needs of every student assigned to their classrooms. Moreover, teachers cannot observe their own teaching; they need the assistance of others to refine their approach with students who are failing academically, those who display challenging behaviors, or both. The school administrator needs to assist in the establishment of a school climate that encourages self-reflection and welcomes teacher supports that actively provide teachers with a greater level of understanding of their interaction with students.

7 Conclusion

The school administrator plays a crucial role in the development of the school climate and the effectiveness of any school-wide discipline program. The administrator must provide leadership and guidance. The administrator's behavior sets the tone for others. Efforts to establish an effective school-wide and classroom-based discipline program, however, will be neither a top-down nor a bottom-up venture. Developing and implementing an effective student discipline program requires input and cooperation of all the stakeholders of the educational community. Administrators, teachers, staff members, parents, students, and even representatives from the larger community can and should play a role in the development and implementation of the program.

The process is not particularly easy, and it requires a significant commitment of time and energy. Those involved in the process must engage in a number of activities:

- Assessment of school discipline records and examination of the school social context to identify where current strengths and problems exist.
- Identification of intervention targets and goals for the school-wide and classroom discipline programs. This will include the identification and effective communication of expected behavior for both students and school personnel.
- Implementation of programs and procedures to teach these expected behaviors to both students and school personnel.
- Development of school-wide academic and behavioral supports, including

- Frequent review of common expectations for behavior and student success (e.g., a school pledge, rule review, clear directions).
- Implementation of programs to foster a healthy school climate (e.g., periodic special incentives supporting identified goals, objectives, and the demonstration of student improvement; provision of instructional supports to foster academic success for all students).
- Staff review of empirically validated best practices for effective teaching and promoting socially competent students, as well as strategies that reflect culturally sensitive methods of instruction.

- Implementation of procedures to meet the needs of students who are most at risk and to support teachers in crisis situations.
- Active monitoring (i.e., systematic observation) of teacher and student interaction.
- Development of key support programs for students (e.g., peer mediation programs, homework clubs, structured activities during key unstructured times) and teachers (e.g., peer mentoring, effective teacher assistance teams).

Effective school-wide discipline involves far more than the identification of agreed-upon consequences for specified rule infractions. Any school-wide discipline program that does not concentrate first and foremost on the prevention of behavior problems is seriously flawed. There is far more empirically supported research on effective prevention practices than there is on effective intervention and remediation of established problem behavior.

The school administrator can serve as a catalyst for change. A critical philosophical ingredient for program success is helping all school personnel recognize that much of the student behavior they confront each day—including problem behavior—is only the students' attempt at appearing competent . The goal of the administrator is to foster a school climate that promotes the competence and success of everyone in the school. While the administrator's day may never be one spent in paradise, it can be one spent in a school climate that is characterized by care and concern.

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APPENDIX A: Exploring Student Diversity in My Classroom

Student Name	Reading Decoding Ability	Reading Comp. Ability	Math Comput. Ability	Organizational Skills	Ability to attend	Academic Interests	Written Expression Ability	Oral Participation Skills	Other	Other	Other

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